

# EVERGREEN ♦ EAST HILLS VISION STRATEGY

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## Falls Creek Neighborhood Meeting

Evergreen Elementary School  
3010 Fowler Road  
San Jose, CA 95135

**Wednesday, May 17, 2006**  
7:00 - 9:00P.M.

### MEETING SUMMARY

#### **Members of the Public Present (34):**

Wesley Lee, Nancy Akino, George Chinn, Klaus Reiter, Joyce Reiter, Ben Manuto, Art Young, Frank LaFetra, Jan LaFetra, Rebeca Garcia Ryker, Ed Abelite, Dennis Cashman, Deb Cashman, David Locke, Cathy Allsup, Ruben Dominguez, Delma Locke, Manjunerth Samparn, Beck Mason, Greg Lytle, Susan Lytle, John Galvan, Clif Black

#### **Members of the Evergreen\*East Hills Vision Strategy Task Force Present:**

Dave Zenker, Jim Zito

#### **Development Community Present:**

Mike Hill

#### **Staff Present:**

Andrew Crabtree, Michael Mena, John Baty

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Meeting began at 7:10 p.m.

#### **Welcome and Overview of Evergreen East Hills Vision Strategy**

Andrew Crabtree welcomed approximately 34 members of public to the community meeting.

John Baty introduced Dave Zenker as a member of the Evergreen East Hills Vision Strategy (EEHVS) Task Force and resident of the Falls Creek neighborhood. Dave described the new Falls Creek Neighborhood Association for the neighborhood north of the Evergreen Valley Community College. Dave also shared that he got involved with the process and the earlier Evergreen Visioning Process two years ago after he read a Mercury News editorial on a proposed new shopping center at the college, which to him represented a dramatic change.

John Baty and Andrew Crabtree provided a brief overview of the EEHVS.

#### Questions

- Are transportation improvements and amenities going to be provided at the same time of development?

- For each phase of development the developers would be required to provide a certain amount of money before issuance of building permits.
- How much of the \$235M would be for transportation?
  - Approximately \$130M.
- Coyote Valley, Gilroy will use 101. Is there a regional plan to handle traffic?
  - The EEHVS EIR is available on the EEHVS website: <http://www.sanjoseca.gov/planning/evergreen/eir.asp> the EIR includes cumulative impact analysis with pending projects including Coyote Valley and others. Highway 101 serves the region and developers could argue that a project wouldn't normally be required to provide solutions to regional impacts.

### **Presentation and Discussion of Evergreen Valley Community College's Development Proposal**

Mike Hill, representing the Evergreen Valley Community College, introduced himself as a resident of Evergreen and a member of the Task Force with Dave Zenker. Mike also indicated that he is not an architect or a land planner, but was a former college administrator.

Mike described the college as different from other developers in that the district is not in it to make a profit and move on. The district has a strong concern with what gets developed on the school site and with how the proposed development interacts with the existing community.

Mike sees the intersection of San Felipe and Yerba Buena as the main hub of southern Evergreen, but there is no current draw. The exhibit that Mike referenced is a conceptual plan with basic concepts. The final plan will come after a developer comes on board and after additional community involvement.

Mike shared the following basic components of the proposed plan:

- Site is approximately 27 acres
- Not selling the land, will be leasing
- Use college land as an asset to develop other college resources
- Still see demand for retail in area; total square footage and mix will continue to be discussed
- 100,000 square feet of retail is being proposed (current center is 60,000 square feet)
- Per District Board can't do certain retail like gas station or arcade
- See need for 1 to 2 story professional office space (medical, dental, etc.)
- Housing is more complicated. Affordable housing is desired, but there is currently no specific mandate. See need for workforce housing (e.g., teachers).

### Questions

- Will it be law to provide workforce housing?
  - Mike Hill indicated there would be a preference for workforce housing with teachers as the focus. Andrew Crabtree added that the Fair Housing Act limits the ability to restrict housing.

- Will dwellings be rentals?
  - Mike answered that the district is looking at different options. For sale units on leased land is not common but is being looked at.
- Will there be a subsidy for faculty housing?
  - Mike answered that the district will look at that possibility. If units are for sale the units will be some percentage below market rate. Will also look at different programs to help with financing.
- Has the college looked at the financial viability of the proposal?
  - Mike indicated that the proposal is being very carefully evaluated with respect to economics.
- Has the type of units for the different scenarios been specified?
  - Mike answered that the type of units has not been specified yet. Need to work with a development partner.
- Will there be trees along the creek?
  - Mike stated that the district understands that trees are a community concern and that the community has a desire for a buffer to the community to the north. The district will work with the development partner and the community on the design of the buffer.
- What drove the mix to include townhouses and multi-family instead of just services?
  - Mike Hill answered that there is a desire to provide a mix of different housing types for different populations and the area is not a regional area and could only support so much services.
- There is controversy over the proposal for a large anchor store.
  - Mike noted that the issue of the large anchor store is an ongoing issue being discussed with the Task Force. The college has had separate meetings with Shapell to discuss. Mike described the retail study commissioned by the City and the retail study from Shapell with conclusions that were contrary to the City's retail study.
- Wasn't it stated in writing that there wouldn't be large tenant on the college site?
  - Mike Hill stated that back in 1994/5 the college wanted to develop 12 acres before Lunardi's. The college got together with councilmember Alice Woody and Shapell and agreed the college wouldn't do a store greater than 20,000 square feet. The intent was not to never develop a grocery store.
- A community member commented that at the time it was clear/understood that there would not be a large grocery store.
- There is already a lot of retail close by car. What type of store would be at the college?
  - Mike Hill stated that he couldn't say, but that it could be a general type grocery store. Mike also noted that the retail study says the area could support additional retail and potential retail tenants would have to understand and take the risk.

- The landlord of Canyon Creek Plaza stated that Lunardi's and Cosentino's are suffering and he has own reports that dispute the City's retail study.
  - Mike Hill suggested the possibility of a new grocery store not be a factor in the success or failure of Lunardi's and Cosentino's. Albertson's and Save-Mart are already there as competition. Lunardi's and Cosentino's appeal to a certain population and people will continue to shop at those stores.
- A community member stated that as a shopper she is not a fan of Lunardi's or Cosentino's or Albertson's or Save-Mart, but shop at Lunardi's and Cosentino's because they are close.
- A question was asked of the Planning staff about the City, in the mid-1990's opposing new grocery stores based on studies.
  - Planning staff has no knowledge of studies on grocery stores in the mid-1990's. Staff has no position on the proposed project and generally leave economic decisions to developers. Based on the retail study there is a 20% leakage of retail out of the area.
- When was the retail study done?
  - Fall 2005.
- What is the General Plan for the site?
  - Currently Public/Quasi-Public (basically school/college uses).
- Why so drastic a change in General Plan, what would justify?
  - Mike Hill answered that the college has had several proposals over the years. The college's master plan process from the mid 1990s described utilizing college land as an asset to help provide revenue for the college and also to provide workforce housing.
- The soccer field on the college is great, but took out tennis courts. The area could use a park and swimming pool.
  - Mike Hill answered that some of the tennis courts have been upgraded. Some of the other tennis courts might be locked-up because they need upgrading and/or are currently unsafe.
- Concern with recent design is with retail and not being able to drive between the existing retail and the proposed. Also design is not walkable.
  - Mike Hill indicated that he shares the same concern.
- Want a visible site for the proposed library on the college site.
  - Mike Hill answered that the college will work with the City to try to keep the library in a prominent location. Mike added that he was not sure that the library would be on the college site.
- A community member expressed concern related to traffic problems associated with proposed developments. She indicated that the public would rather deal with individual projects an not all four at the same time and shared the following concerns:
  - No accountability for problems that exist today.
  - In general hear about concerns related to quality of life.

- Support the existing General Plan
- Solve existing traffic problems first, including San Felipe median
- Development will exacerbate existing problems
- See \$235M as a ransom
- With additional units and currently overcrowded schools, what is the solution?
  - Mike Hill pointed out that the elementary and high school districts participate on the EEHVS Task Force. At the elementary school level there is more agreement than at the high school level.
  - Jim Zito added that one benefit of the development proposal is that it would trigger the need for building 3 new elementary schools, which would relieve the overcrowding issue. The high school remains a big issue.
- Why are we not addressing the high school issue now?
  - Mike Hill described the high school issue as complicated with the East Side Union High School District (ESUHSD) saying it has capacity, but has to move boundaries. Mike pointed out that the ESUHSD Board President is on the Task Force and the high school discussion is ongoing.
- How is the high school bioscience partnership working with the college?
  - Mike Hill stated that the college set up 5 portable classrooms at first then expanded to 10. The college wants to evaluate the program before finding a permanent location. Housing about 300 students currently.
  - A community member suggested as part of the possible amenities package building something nice for the high school students.
- When is the project going to start?
  - Mike Hill answered that there is still the EEHVS process to go through and the college does not have a development partner yet, so the earliest estimate would be 2 years.
  - Andrew Crabtree added that the earliest any of the sites could begin construction would be spring 2007 if EEHVS was approved later this year (2006).
- A community member asked Mike Hill to describe the components of the colleges proposal.
  - Mike Hill described the conceptual plan as an envelope of components with retail, office and housing.
- Dave Zenker asked what amenities the community would like to see, noting that Falls Creek park just received funding.
  - One member of the public stated that he doesn't give a "rats ass" about amenities. He doesn't want there to be a new grocery store on the college site.
- A community members asked what the process would be for starting a moratorium on development until real solutions to traffic and schools could be found.

- Andrew Crabtree responded that the current Evergreen Development Policy, although not a moratorium, it is close. Should the policy be changed is the question that is currently being discussed. There will be several opportunities for the community to provide input.
- Can the City Council change the current development policy?
  - It would take a majority of Council to make a change to the policy.
- Ed Abelite of Canyon Creek Plaza asked the audience by show of hands who thought it would be a good idea to have a grocery store on the college site? No hands were raised.
- A community member asked about the height requirement for the college site.
  - Andrew Crabtree answered that there is generally a citywide height limit of 50-feet. If the college is proposing 4-story residential, generally that would not exceed 50-feet. John Baty clarified that the EIR does describe an envelope of development that could include heights up to 60-feet. A General Plan Amendment would need to be approved to allow this height.
- Who decides what fits in with a neighborhood?
  - Ultimately the City Council.
- What is the best way to communicate to Planning?
  - Public meetings, writing is effective, attending Task Force meetings.
- The developers are offering millions, what about C&C taxes?
  - The developers are saying that they are going to provide money on top of their normal fees.
- Dave Cortese is saying that the developers have the right to develop their property.
  - It's a constitutional property rights issue. The City doesn't have the right to say a property owner can't develop anything, but the City can guide development.
- What is the current outlook for development along Yerba Buena (Campus Industrial)?
  - Between 950 and 1,950 units.
- A community member stated that he feels the properties will develop and that now is the time to provide input.
- The EEHVS is a tool to ensure that housing will be developed on industrial sites in conflict with the General Plan. What happened with the goal of the reverse commute?
  - Andrew Crabtree noted that the EEHVS is a City Council initiated process. The concept of the reverse commute was encouraged with the Berryessa-Evergreen Swap of the 1980s. Industrial lands in Berryessa were swapped with residential lands in Evergreen.
- A member of the public stated that he is intrigued that the City Council is not talking about traffic.
- For the commercial part of the development proposal are restaurants being looked at?

- Andrew Crabtree pointed out that the retail study shows a big demand for “white tablecloth/sitdown” restaurants. Perhaps the site with the most commercial opportunities is the Arcadia site. The City doesn’t designate specific tenants.

Meeting Adjourned at 9:15 p.m.